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DAGGER WITH A CARVED ROCK-CRYSTAL HILT, INLAID WITH GOLD,
RUBIES, AND EMERALDS

INDIA; 2ND HALF OF 17TH CENTURY

L: 29.8 CM

Sumptuous weapons like this dagger, made of costly and finely worked materials, were not intended for use and should be considered ornaments. They were visible testimony to the owner's importance and were often used as gifts from princes to faithful subjects.

In contrast to many other older cut-and-thrust weapons, this dagger still retains its original blade. The steel was intricately damascened and inlaid with gold.

The rock-crystal hilt ends in a camel's head, complete with a gold harness and inlaid with rubies and emeralds. The heads of other animals, such as horses, tigers and rams, were also frequently found at the top of the Mughal period's finely conceived dagger hilts.

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